

H.E. Dr. Mulatu Teshome, President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Opening Address on the Fourth High Level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management

 Honourable Ministers,

 Distinguished Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

 Distinguished Delegates of Member States,

 H. E. Dr. Li Pengde, Co-Chair of the Committee of Experts of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM)

 H.E. Mr. Stefan Schweinfest, Director of United Nations Statistics Division

 Leaders and Experts on Geospatial Information Management,

 Ladies & Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government and Peoples of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, I welcome you all to Addis Abeba, Ethiopia, to participate in this Fourth High Level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management.

I am pleased that this Forum, the first of its kind to be held in Africa, is being held here in Addis Abeba, the Diplomatic Capital of Africa and the

befitting Head Quarters of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA).

The theme of this conference, “**Good Land Governance for the 2030 Agenda**” is also mainly appropriate for our continent Africa, particularly those of us in sub-Saharan Africa as most of the laudable and much anticipated 17 Goals of the United Nations 2030 Agenda, cannot be achieved without the introduction of modern land management systems accompanied by good land governance. I say this because in sub-Saharan Africa, next to our human resource, land is our most important resource that touches upon all aspects of the lives of our peoples. Hence, land is fundamental for economic development and poverty alleviation and thereby improving the livelihoods of our peoples and ensuring the sustainable management of our natural resources, all of which are the main tenets of the United Nations Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

Distinguished Participants,

Further to its alignment with the United Nations Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, Good Land Governance is also aligned with Agenda 2063 of our continental organization, the African Union (AU).

Among the Seven Aspirations for the **Africa We Want** of the AU Agenda 2063, a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and Sustainable Development; an Africa of Good Governance, Democracy, respect for Human Rights, Justice and the Rule of Law; a Peaceful and Secure Africa cannot be realized unless we ensure Good Land Governance in our Continent.

Coming closer home to my country Ethiopia, my Government has been pursuing a policy of sustainable and equitable development in our country to attain our vision of eradicating poverty and become a lower middle-income country by 2025. In this regard, we have managed to attain a double-digit growth of almost 11% on average consecutively for the past 12 years. Our recently launched Second Growth and Transformation Plan, which covers the period 2015/2016 to 2019/2020, is devised to build on our past achievements and continue with this trend to ensure that our 2025 vision is realized. In order to succeed in this laudable objective of accelerated sustainable and equitable development effort, my Government recognizes that Good Governance in general and Good Land Governance in particular are critical.

It is this recognition and understanding that has led us to embarking upon the implementation of modern Land Management tools and systems in both rural and urban Ethiopia. Currently, the implementation of Modern Land Management systems is in full swing in the rural areas of the four major regions of our country that are mainly sedentary agriculture based, and all the major cities and towns of our country.

In this endeavor, we have come to realize that Geospatial Information related products and services, such as remotely sensed imagery like aerial photographs and satellite imagery, ground survey data and maps of appropriate scale are essential tools for implementing a transparent, fit-for-purpose and modern land management system and thereby ensuring good land governance in support of sustainable development.

Distinguished Participants,

It is in this regard, that developing countries like Ethiopia need to develop their capacity in the generation, compilation, analysis and dissemination of authoritative, accurate and timely geospatial information.

I believe the establishment of UN-GGIM and its affiliate regional entities will help Member States mainly those of us from developing countries to

build our capacity and capability in the multifaceted application and use of geospatial information for the much needed sustainable development in our countries and the world at large.

Among the many benefits of UN-GGIM, organizing such High Level Forums that bring together policy makers, executives and experts of the geospatial industry are worth our appreciation. The Forums enable Member States and other geospatial stakeholders with the unique opportunity to raise political awareness and to share and learn from each other new ideas, methods and strategies to support local, regional and global geospatial information management initiatives.

Hence, I call upon all the participants of this 4th High Level Forum to actively engage in the panel discussions full of eminent keynote speakers and panelists as indicated in the very well crafted and topical agenda for the next three days.

It is my pleasure again to wish you productive and invigorating discussions enriched with actionable recommendations that will raise the visibility and appreciation of geospatial technologies in all the economic and social sectors of our world. I also wish you a pleasant and enjoyable stay in Addis Abeba, the Diplomatic Capital of Africa.

With this brief note, I declare the 4th High Level Forum on United Nations
Global Geospatial Information Management officially open.

I Thank You.